

THE POLICE AND CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION IN SOUTH EASTERN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study sought to find out the techniques, effectiveness and challenges of Police criminal investigation in South-East Nigeria with special focus on Enugu State. Simple random sampling method was used to select 330 respondents for the study while 8 persons were purposively selected for in-depth interview. Data were collected through the use of questionnaire, in-depth interview, as well as from secondary sources. The data obtained from the field were analyzed using simple descriptive techniques such as frequency count, percentage, and graphs while the data obtained through interviews and documentary sources were content analyzed. The findings revealed that factors such as lack of education, lack of training/skills, inadequate equipment, inadequate funding, political interference among others account for the high rate of 'undetected' and 'pending' criminal cases in Nigeria. This study has implications for criminal justice system and crime control policy managers.

Keywords: Police, Crime, Criminal Investigation, South-Eastern Nigeria.

Introduction and statement of the problem

The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) is saddled with many responsibilities, including the maintenance of internal security; preservation of law and order; prevention and detection of crime; apprehension of offenders; prosecution of offenders; protection of life and property; due enforcement of law and regulations with which they are directly charged and the performance of para- military duties within or without Nigeria as they may be required under the laws of the country (Tamuno, 1970; Odekunle, 1981; Federal Republic of Nigeria Constitution, 1999; Okiro, 2008). More so, Wabara (2005, p. 18) asserts that “every society needs a strong and effective police force to maintain law and order, to promote peace and harmony and to secure lives and property”. The effectiveness of the police in crime control lies in its ability to contain criminal activities in Nigeria through preventive strategies, proper investigation of criminal cases and reduction of unsolved and undetected cases which abound in the country’s criminal justice system. Thus, we argue that the functional

effectiveness of the police is significantly related to how efficient they are in tackling the crime situation in the society.

The control of crime in any society is dependent to a very large extent on the effectiveness of the police in managing its criminal investigation department. This will also reflect the kind of social order and social control in place in the society. As has been observed, crime is controlled by means of good and efficient investigation and detective ability and actions, the prompt apprehension and prosecution of offenders, effective and prompt action in dealing with all criminal activities in order to produce suppressive or deterrent effects on habitual and potential offenders (Membere, 1982).

In Nigeria today, crime has taken an alarming dimension in its intensity, pattern and dynamics. In its intensity, crime is sustained overtime in such a way that it is conscientiously planned, and skillfully executed with a frequency that baffles even law enforcement agents and the general public. Its pattern cannot be determined in terms of knowing where and when crime will be committed and the possible criminal offenders. What is more, it covers both the rural and urban areas with a kind of dynamic nature which involves highly sophisticated weapons of warfare that law enforcement agents do not have and sometimes cannot withstand or confront. In the past, criminals used light weapons and firearms but today highly improvised explosive devices (IED) and anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons are used in Nigeria. The impression one gets is that criminals are on the rampage in the country. Nowhere is safe anymore, not even police stations and barracks.

Indeed, criminals sometimes attack police stations in order to collect combat weapons from police armouries and personnel. This may sound, somehow unbelievable, but it is happening in Nigeria. For instance, armed robbers on July 17, 2009 attacked and set ablaze the police station in the University town of Nsukka, Enugu state, in South Eastern Nigeria. They also attacked four banks in the town. In the process, they killed the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) and three other police officers who tried to confront them (Ossai, 2009). Three days later, the then Inspector-General of Police, while displaying one of the recovered rocket launchers used by robbers in the attack, declared that “we are all in perpetual war, everlasting war with criminals in the South East” (Omoluabi, 2009 p.10).

The South East zone of Nigeria is well-known for violent crimes in Nigeria. Apart from being a leading contender in armed robbery, following the end of the Nigerian civil war in January 1970, “the zone became a haven for bands of kidnappers throughout 2009 and 2010 without any effective response from the federal government...” (Ukiwo, 2012 p. 11). There is a persistent view in Nigeria that crime is on the increase and this has heightened the feeling of insecurity among the general public. Most Nigerians affirm that crime rates and insecurity in the country are very high and that over the years the country has experienced a steady rise in crime. According to Salay (2005), organized and non – organized crime and attendant vices such as smuggling, kidnapping, cross border crimes, cybercrimes, carjacking, human trafficking, murder, armed robbery, and terrorism have become sources of worry for the government and the citizens. Salay (2005) further observed that incidents of high profile crime and politically motivated killing, ethnic violence and terrorism have lately worsened the complication of the crime situation in the country.

The most worrisome of the crime problem in Nigeria is the fact that the police seem helpless in tackling the crime problem in the country from the angle of investigation and apprehension of offenders. This is especially so as most of the criminal cases have remained ‘unsolved’, ‘undetected’ or ‘pending investigation’. It is still on record that till

date, the police are yet to find the killers of Chief Bola Ige, a sitting Attorney General and Minister of Justice of the Federation, who was assassinated in his home town in Ibadan in 2007 (Akintunde, 2010). If the killers of the former number one law officer of the country are yet to be identified and apprehended by the police, the fate of the ordinary citizens in Nigeria can better be imagined.

It is important to note that between 1996 and 2000, the Nigeria Police recorded a total of 1,072,026 criminal cases. Out of these cases, 56.9 percent of the cases were either 'under-investigation, 'undetected' or 'unsolved' (Soyombo, 2005, p.131). This means that a significant 57 percent of the cases were under-investigation or remained unsolved or even closed for lack of diligent investigation. <http://www.cleen.org/summary/percent2dofcrimepercentstatisticspercent2cs.nigeria.2008>). The steady increase of unsolved crimes of various descriptions in recent times has engendered a general feeling of insecurity of lives and property among Nigerians, particularly those in South-East.

This apparent inefficiency of the Nigeria Police to stem the tide of crime in the society, through effective management of criminal investigation, is a serious setback on the criminal justice system. This is because, according to Conklin (1989, p. 384), "the police is the pivot on which the justice system stands". So, it is certain that police inefficiency in tackling criminal cases through proper management of its Criminal Investigation Unit will definitely affect the criminal justice system adversely. Aside from that, it will affect the general psyche of the public thereby deepening a general feeling of insecurity and fear among the people. In fact, this was the expression of the five South-Eastern Governors when they told former President Goodluck Jonathan that "the type of arms and ammunition at the disposal of the criminals and professionalism of the criminals are beyond the capabilities of the states" (Chidozie, 2010 p.6). This came at the heels of the upsurge of armed robberies, kidnapping and other violent crimes in the city of Aba, one of the nerve commercial centers in South-Eastern Nigeria. It is worthy to note that the situation has not changed till date, with the police appearing increasingly unable to conduct effective criminal investigation of cases reported or known to them. This inability was brought to the fore by the one time Inspector General of Police, Mr. Ogbonnaya Onovo, when he told his officers and men in Owerri, Imo State, at the peak of the kidnapping saga in the South-East Zone of Nigeria that "you have done well in maintaining peace and order. But you have failed in preventing crimes" (Akasike & Abimbola, 2010 p.4). This statement is a paradox. How can one say that the police have maintained peace and order when they cannot prevent crime? This raises a lot of questions about police efficiency and effectiveness in crime control generally and in particular, criminal investigation in Nigeria. It must be emphasized that the objectives of criminal investigation include to detect crime; locate and identify suspects in crimes; locate, document, and preserve evidence in crimes; arrest suspects in crimes, recover stolen property and prepare sound criminal cases for prosecution (Lyman, 2011). The pertinent questions here are: do the Police in Nigeria have what it takes to execute the above stated objectives of criminal investigation? If the answer is yes, then why is there high rate of 'unsolved' criminal cases in Nigeria?

It must be acknowledged that the level at which crime is prevented in any society very much depends on the level at which the police are able to arrest, investigate, prosecute and gain conviction of offenders in court. In other words, the police must show its ability or capacity and competence to put the criminals off the streets by effective criminal investigation processes. Thus, the effectiveness of the police is fundamentally related to

their ability to solve criminal cases when crimes have occurred. More importantly, Gibbons (1968, p.6) argues that ‘crime is a social phenomenon, as a social phenomenon, the methods or ways of investigating the commission of crime needs to be studied in our social setting’.

Much of the literature on the police in Nigeria have been interested and focused on the police and crime control in general. According to Igbo (2000), Tamuno (1970) was interested more or less on the historical development of the modern Nigeria police force while Odekunle’s (1979) study of the functional performance of the police was too broad to grapple adequately with one single aspect of the many functions of the police. Similarly, Okonkwo’s (1966) work was more concerned with the problematic police/public relations in Nigeria. Thus, Police criminal investigation is an area where researchers should address themselves not only because it was neglected in the past but because one cannot talk of crime control, crime prevention or police effectiveness without first considering “the very most important function of police work – criminal investigation” (Chappell, Gordon & Moore, 1985, p.342).

Against this backdrop, this study seeks to interrogate the factors responsible for the high rate of ‘undetected’ or ‘unsolved’ criminal cases in Nigeria, using the South-Eastern, Nigeria as our reference point. In pursuance of this general objective, the study seeks answers to the following questions (1) what factors account for the high rate of ‘undetected or unsolved’ criminal cases in South-East Nigeria? (2) What investigative techniques are used by the police during investigation? (3) How effective are these techniques? (4) What are the challenges facing the police in criminal investigation?

Research Methodology

The South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria is one of the six geo-political Zones in Nigeria. It consists of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo States. The South East Zone of Nigeria is reported as the zone with the highest level of national average in terms of crime victimization of 44 percent in 2013, with Enugu State having the highest victims of crime of 70 percent within the same period (CLEEN Foundation Report, 2013). Aside from the fact that Enugu State recorded the highest number of adjourned criminal cases at the instance of the police in South East zone of Nigeria (Nigeria Bureau of Statistics, 2009). Enugu State was selected for this study because of its pre-eminent position in criminal activities, among other states in the zone. Before the Nigerian civil war, Enugu, the current capital of Enugu state, was the capital of the former Eastern Region of Nigeria, which today include five states in the South-East geo-political zone, and four states in the South-South zone of Nigeria.

Enugu state has a population of about 3,257,298 people (National Population Commission, 2006). The state has three (3) Area Commands with about 8,939 police officers as at 2007 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2009). Out of this number, about 950 police officers were involved in criminal investigation duties in the forty-four police divisions and stations in the state at the time of the study.

The sample size for the study was 330 serving police officers engaged in criminal investigation duties. A multi-stage sampling method was used to select respondents for the study. The procedure commenced with the purposive selection of the State CID and the 3 Area Command offices. The second stage involved the selection of 6 police stations/divisions from each of the three Area Commands in the state using the simple random (balloting) sampling technique. The third stage involved the use of stratified

random sampling method to select 15 respondents of various ranks from the 22 stations/divisions including the area commands and the State CID to give a total sample size of 330. A total of 330 questionnaires were administered to the respondents.

Two research instruments were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data for the study. These were the questionnaire and in-depth interview (IDI) guide. The questionnaire comprised closed-ended questions and covered two broad areas – socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and substantive issues of the research. In-depth interviews were held with 8 Senior Police Officers (SPOs) in order to have better and in-depth information on some of the issues raised and those not adequately covered in the questionnaire. The responses from the interview were carefully integrated with those of the questionnaire to give the study a reliable and valid outcome.

Results and Discussions

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. It shows that 87 percent of the respondents are male while 13 percent are female. This is an indication of the recruitment discrimination in the police which tends to favour male officers over female police officers. The male dominance in the criminal investigation department could also be attributed to the hazardous nature of dealing with hardened criminals which female officers may not be able to handle. The female officers basically take charge of cases involving female criminals and minor juvenile cases.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents' socio-demographic characteristics

Variables	Frequency (330)	Percentage
Gender		
Male	287	87
Female	43	13
Marital Status		
Single	88	26.4
Married	201	61.1
Widowed	24	7.4
Divorced	11	7.4
Separated	6	1.8
Educational Level		
Primary	35	10.6
GCE O/L	233	70.6
NCE/Diploma	37	11.2
Degree	25	7.6
Age		
18-25	78	23.6
26-33	129	39.1
34-41	67	20.3
42-49	36	10.9
50-57	20	6.1
Working Experience		
0-8	98	29.7
9-17	128	38.8
18-26	110	25.1
27-35	44	6.4
Rank		
Constable	66	20.0
Corporal	88	26.7
Sergeant	110	33.3
Inspector	44	13.3
ASP+	22	6.7
Religious Affiliation		
Christianity	178	53.9
Islam	98	29.7
Others	54	16.4
Residence		
Barracks	103	31.2
Outside Barracks	227	68.8

Source: Field Survey, 2014

On the marital status of the respondents, about 61.1 percent are married while 26.4 percent are single. This was obvious since most police officers were of adult age. Slightly over a quarter (26.4 percent) was single in the investigation unit and most of them were young and inexperienced in the rudiments of criminal investigation.

The educational level of the respondents shows that 70.6 percent of the respondents have Secondary School or General Certificate of Education Certificate while 10.6 percent had First School Leaving Certificate. Significant in this study is that 11.2 percent and 7.6 percent of officers in the Criminal Investigation Unit hold a NCE/Diploma Certificate and Degree Certificates respectively. Although majority (70.6 percent) of the respondents are literate in that they hold the minimum educational qualification for any public office job in Nigeria, this has not been reflected in the ‘clearance rate’ of criminal investigations. This suggests that where highly educated personnel (with Degree Certificate) are lacking, it tends to reflect in the productive output of the criminal investigation department. It is important to reiterate that education remains one of the most vital tools in criminal investigation. The writing of investigation reports, preparation of case files for prosecution processes, arrangement of exhibits and witnesses demand high level of education and experience.

The age of the respondents shows that about 39.1 percent fall within the age group of 26-33 years. 23.6 percent were within age 18-25 years while 20.3 percent were within age 34-41 years. It shows that majority of the respondents in the Criminal Investigation Unit are young and in their active working years. Respondent’s working experience shows that a majority (38.8 percent) had 9-17 years of working experience; about 29.7 percent had 0-8 years of working experience, while 25.1 percent had between 18-23 years of working experience.

The respondents whose work experiences fall between 27-35 years constitute about 6.4 percent. This is an indication that experienced officers in the criminal investigation department are few resulting to massive undetected and pending investigation cases. A more serious observation shows that the average years of working experience of the respondents is 20.1 years while the standard deviation is 24.3 years. Consequent upon this, it would appear that the apparent large number of cases under investigation and undetected in Nigeria are spiral effects of the inadequacies that are found in the criminal investigation department as shown in this study.

On respondents’ ranks, majority (33.3 percent) fall within the rank of Sergeants while Corporals were 26.7 percent. The implication of this in our study is that three out of every five of the respondents are “non-commissioned officers” (NCOs). This depicts that this “rank group” is the most vibrant and energetic backbone of the Criminal Investigation Department in particular and the police in general. Further findings indicate a very insignificant 6.7 percent of respondents within the Assistant Superintendent of Police and above. Most of these officers are either Divisional Crime Officers (DCOs) or Unit Heads who give instruction regarding criminal investigations.

Respondents’ religious affiliation shows that over half of them (53.9 percent) were Christians; about 29.7 percent were Muslims while only 6.4 percent had other religious affiliations. This is because the study was carried out in a Christian dominated area. Respondents’ residence shows that two-third (68.8 percent) live outside the barracks while slightly less than one-third (31.2 percent) live within the barracks. This is an indication of

the logistic problems associated with the police. The problem of inadequate accommodation for officers of the Nigeria Police is a perennial issue that the government needs to tackle. The implication of this finding is that officers are often not available to handle criminal cases promptly, as and when reported at the station. Very often, when cases are reported, there are no personnel on ground to quickly move into action with the investigation due to the fact that officers live outside the barracks. The result is that by the time officers are ready to move into investigation some of the evidences might have been tampered with or lost and this may be one of the reasons for unsolved cases.

Factors Responsible for the High Rates of Undetected/Pending Criminal Investigation cases

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Perception of Factors that cause high rate of undetected/pending criminal investigation cases

Factors	Frequency (n=330)	Percentage
Poor level of education	49	14.8
Inadequate training and skill	36	10.9
Corruption	34	10.3
Lack of experience	41	12.4
Non use/unwillingness of informant	39	11.8
Inadequate facilities	35	10.6
Lack of forensic knowledge	20	6.1
Inadequate funding	33	10
Political interference	24	7.3
Lack of public cooperation	19	5.8

Source: Field Survey, 2014

In spite of police efforts to clear all criminal investigation cases reported to them, undetected, pending or unsolved criminal cases abound due to lack of diligent investigation. The reason for this may not be unconnected with the way the police handle criminal investigation cases in Nigeria. Table 2 above shows that 14.8 percent and 12.4 percent of the respondents attribute low clearance rate of criminal investigation cases to lack of education and experience respectively. Investigation demands high level of critical thinking and scientific methodology which the ordinary police officer with general certificate of education may not possess. It is interesting to note that 11.8 percent of respondents attribute non-use or informants' unwillingness to volunteer information as one of the factors causing unsolved and undetected criminal investigation cases. Information is the key to solving criminal investigation cases. Where it is lacking, it brings investigation cases to their dead end. Information in terms of evidence is made available by witnesses or informants and where they are not supplied, investigation automatically fizzles out for clueless officers. About 10.9 percent of respondents attributed the reason for pending investigation cases to 'inadequate training and skill' and 10.0 percent attributed to it 'inadequate funding' while 10.6 percent indicated inadequate facilities.

On inadequate funding, for instance, it was noted that many victims of crime or their families often bear the cost of their cases up to its final determination in court, if and when the cases were investigated to reach that level. The understanding is that when a victim of crime reports a case at the police station, he/she has to provide the transport fare for the arrest of the suspect. The victim may also provide money for the file and other stationeries

that would be used in the compilation of the case file. The implication of this to criminal justice system is that when a victim is unable to sponsor his/her case reported at the police station, the case may never be investigated, and if investigated, it may systematically and tactically be allowed to die a natural death. This is the fate of most pending, undetected, and unsolved criminal cases in Nigeria. These were corroborated by some officers during the interview. According to one officer:

Sometimes, victims (complainants) are required to assist the police in providing some of the logistics required in the investigation of a case especially with regards to transportation. This is because there is no funds set aside for criminal investigation processes. However, this is not by force but with the understanding of the complainants (Male Superior Police Officer).

Another officer averred that:

Trained Police Officers from the Detective College Enugu are expected to be posted to Investigation Branches in the states after their training for them to boost the criminal investigation branches in line with recommendations from the Commandants of the Detective College. But in most cases Divisional Police Officers (DPOs) disregard this order. The result is that qualified, trained and experienced officers will be lacking in investigation (Male Superior Police Officer).

In the same vein, another respondent affirmed that:

The police lack adequate facilities to effectively investigate criminal cases in Nigeria. For example, we don't have finger print materials, cameras, computers, scientific laboratories and even office stationeries. The office is poorly funded and these hamper the investigation of criminal cases (Male Superior Police Officer).

These findings are in consonance with the findings of previous studies by Walker (1989), Finnegan (1976), Rosberg (1978) and Onwu (1998). Each of these researchers noted the importance of training, experience, education and facilities in criminal investigation enterprise.

Table 2 further shows that 10.3 percent of respondents attribute undetected and pending criminal investigation cases to 'corruption' and 7.3 percent to 'political interference'. The case of misappropriation of over 150 Million US Dollars (5.7 Billion Naira) by the former Inspector General of Police, Mr. Tafa Balogun (Chesa, Ogunsola, Faturoti, Onoiribholo, & Igbekoyi, 2015; Onyeozili, 2005), is a typical example of the monumental corruption in the Nigeria Police. This kind of behaviour grossly affects the operations of the Nigeria Police, especially the criminal investigation department. Corruption is a cankerworm which appears to have eaten deep into the fabric of the Nigerian society. The police in Nigeria are not immune to it. If anything, they are neck-deep into it regardless of their attempts to deny it and blame it on the society. One of the interviewees declared:

You know that corruption is a national disease, it is not atypical to the police and the police cannot claim to be saints. There are some bad ones in the investigation branch that are still involved in collecting bribe from people. But the police frown at such acts (Male Superior Police Officer).

The involvement of political leaders in criminal investigation cases in Nigeria cannot also be overemphasized. It is very common to hear that a suspected criminal was ordered to be released just by ‘order from above’. This has kept many cases in the endless list of pending investigation. It has also encouraged criminality with impunity and general insecurity in the country. This was further corroborated by another interviewee, when he declared:

Yes, it is true, sometimes while investigation is going on in a criminal case a suspect may be ordered to be released on bail just by mere ‘order from above’. But this kind of case is usually minor offences. However, the government may use the Directorate of Public Prosecution (DPP) or the Attorney General of the Federation to stop the investigation of serious offences like murder, assassination and others (Male Superior Police Officer).

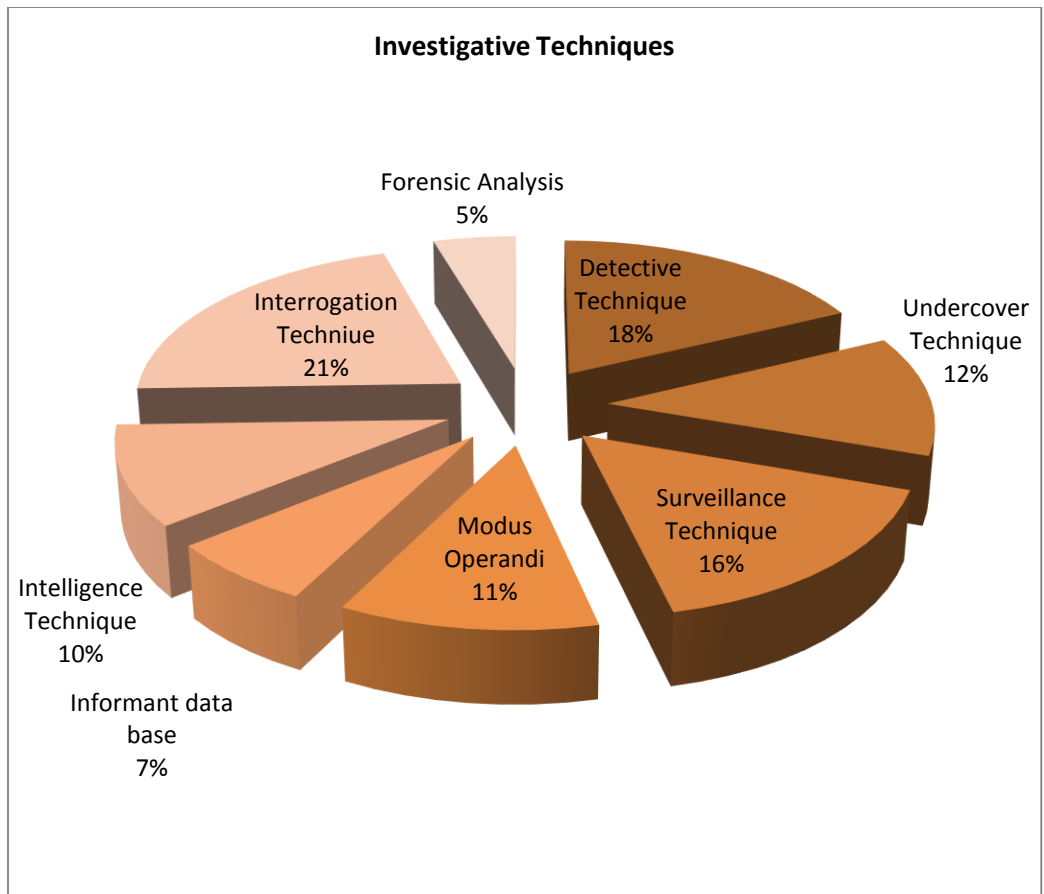
Similarly, another respondent affirmed that:

In Nigeria, you cannot rule out the involvement of political interference or even interference from superior members of the force who may actually like to intervene in a case where they have interest. But in most cases, the offences involved are minor cases or cases that can be settled without serious implications on justice. Yes, we do stop a case at the instance of senior colleagues or from political godfathers (Female Superior Police Officer).

Investigative Techniques Adopted by the Police in Criminal Investigation

Figure 1 shows some of the investigative tools which members of the Nigeria Police Criminal Investigation Department adopt in the conduct of their investigations. The figure shows that majority (20.9 percent) of respondents indicated ‘interrogation technique’, 17.9 percent of respondents chose ‘detective technique’ while 12.4 percent of respondents mentioned ‘undercover technique’ as techniques employed by detectives during criminal investigation.

Figure 1: A Pie Chart showing the investigative techniques adopted during criminal investigation



Field Survey, 2014

Moreover, 11.0 percent of respondents indicated modus operandi. We wonder how police can effectively utilize modus operandi when they do not have records of criminal background information due to lack of information database.

In Nigeria, one can hardly be furnished with the photographs, fingerprints, handwriting, biometric data or other relevant information regarding recidivists, and other criminal elements in any known location. In modern crime fighting operations and criminal investigation, intelligence and information data base are very fundamental. But these are neglected, ignored and treated with levity in Nigeria. The unfriendly attitude of police men towards informants is a great hindrance to the informant data base of the police. It is an irrefutable fact that in Nigeria witnesses (informants) are often reluctant to come forward to provide information to the police for fear of being victimized by the criminals. The implication is that Police investigators turn to inhuman treatment of suspects by the application of torture and unorthodox investigative techniques in order to extract confessional statement from them. The result is that such confessional statements do not stand the test of criminal evidence process in the criminal justice system, and thus help in rendering the process of prosecution futile. Thus, the society is filled with criminals that

would have been in jail, but for police poor and incompetent handling of criminal investigation, such person are often set free by the courts.

Conclusion

The effectiveness of the police depends a lot on the operations of the Criminal Investigation Department because the investigation, arrest and prosecution of criminals depend largely on the activities of this department. In short, the assessment of police performance is significantly interwoven with the performance of this department. The issue of criminal investigation is a very serious and fragile one to deal with in the sense that the crime rates in any society depend largely on the efficient and effective management of police criminal investigation department. The indictment of the police for their inability to solve many cases of murder, armed robbery, kidnapping, theft etc. depend on the extent to which criminal cases are efficiently and effectively managed by the police criminal investigation department. There is no society that can talk of crime prevention, crime control, social control or social order without skilled and experienced, trained and well equipped criminal investigation/intelligence department.

This study examined the activities of the police in relation to crime and criminal investigation with special reference to the South East Zone of Nigeria. The findings revealed, among others, that such factors as bribery and corruption, lack of experience, inadequate training, political interference and under utilization of informants are responsible for the many cases which have remained undetected or unsolved, or under investigation in Nigeria generally, and South East States in particular. In response to the many unsolved or undetected criminal investigation cases, the South East Police Commands, particularly Enugu State police command, utilized a number of strategies or investigative techniques such as detective technique, intelligence technique, surveillance, among others, with the view of containing the rising cases of unsolved crimes in Nigeria. However, these techniques were found not to be adequate and effective in addressing or reducing the rate of undetected crimes in the society. It is certainly obvious, going by the findings of this study, that South-East Nigeria, particularly Enugu State Police Command, has not adequately responded to the high rate of unsolved, undetected, and pending criminal investigation cases in the state. This is in spite of the various strategies and techniques adopted in tackling criminality and other sundry vices in the country. Many unsolved criminal cases are worsened by the police use of unorthodox investigative techniques that involve torturing of suspects. The result is that cases subjected to this kind of investigation remain unsolved as suspects or accused are discharged by the court for want of evidence and incompetent police investigation.

Education, training and skill are vital tools in investigation. Therefore, Police managers should provide adequate and continuous education and training and re-training for personnel in the field of criminal investigation. If genuine improvement towards crime reduction and solvability rate is to be achieved, then such trained, experienced and educated personnel should be deployed to the investigation departments to enable them exhibit their skills and professionalism.

There is also the need to overhaul the Criminal Investigation Department to be more result-oriented by recruiting graduates of various academic fields into the department. This will not only boost the investigative abilities and clearance rate of crime but will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the police.

Similarly, police criminal investigation department should be professionalized and staffed with trained professionals to handle various aspects of criminal investigation such as forensic analysis; finger printing, photographing, crime scene analysis, ballistics, detective intelligence and linguist.

The Police should establish a computerized information data bank where records of all persons arrested in connection with criminal matters will be kept and especially those involved in violent crime. This will enhance its ability to solve criminal cases thereby boosting its efficiency in criminal investigation.

In the new global war on terrorism, trans-border crime, money laundering, organized drug trafficking, armed robbery, kidnapping, cybercrime etc., information is the key. Therefore it is very imperative for the police to establish a synergy with both foreign and local security agencies to improve their information network and crime investigation strategies. There is need also for government to minimally reduce its interference in criminal investigation matters and allow for due process of law to take its course.

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